

EC Structural Funds



Territorial employment pacts – examples of good practice



European Commission

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A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT SANTER



Jacques Santer
President of the European
Commission

When I launched the Confidence Pact for Employment, I set out to bring together all the players in the employment field, with all our strengths and capabilities, in the search for employment growth.

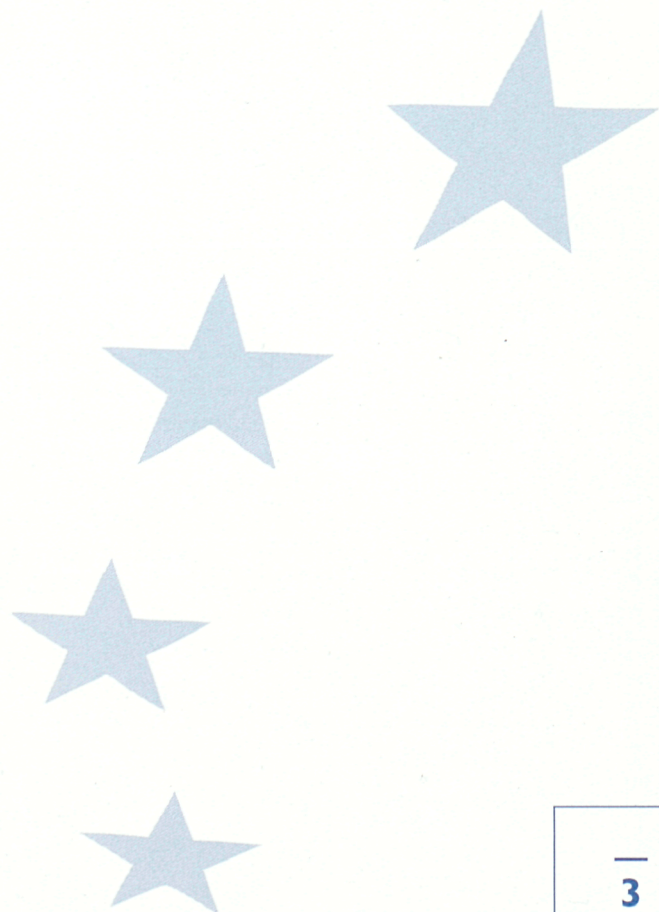
In Europe, we have a hand of trump cards. We have the Single Market, our traditions of innovation and technological progress, our model of society; and shortly we shall have our own currency, which will give us the same strength in financial markets as the dollar. We have a hand of high cards - but we need to play them well!

And we need to play as partners, not opponents. To pool our trumps, so that together we can better face up to the challenges of a world in transition, of global trade, of the rapid pace of change in our own societies.

Territorial Employment Pacts are a microcosm of what Europe's Member States - and Europe itself - must do. It is only by bringing together people at local and regional levels, to share their specific needs and concerns, but also take advantage together of their specific strengths, talents and opportunities, that we shall get through today's far too high levels of unemployment and come to a society with room for everyone.

I am therefore very pleased to present this brochure, which brings together examples from a variety of projects already financed by the European Union. These projects are not Territorial Employment Pacts but each one has experience it can share in a related area, from which we can all benefit.

I hope that coordinators of all Territorial Employment Pacts will be able to read this brochure and draw some useful lessons. It is only by learning from others and on constantly passing on good practice that the Territorial Employment Pacts will be able to bring a true contribution to the sort of employment growth we are looking for.



INTRODUCTION



Unemployment remains a serious problem in the European Union. The Heads of State and Government, concerned about the worsening employment situation since the beginning of the 1990s, have placed this issue at the forefront of Union priorities.

Following publication of the European Commission's White Paper on Growth, Competitiveness and Employment at the end of 1993, the various European Councils which have met since then have succeeded in implementing a European employment strategy. It is based on a global approach to all the factors which influence progress on employment in Europe. This strategy also takes into account the macro-economic dimensions influencing employment as well as aspects relating to the necessary structural reforms of the labour market. In addition, the European Council has recognised the importance of working at a regional and local level to promote employment.

The key role played by the local and regional dimension in curbing unemployment has now been acknowledged, thanks in part to the Commission's work on local development and employment initiatives. The growing importance of the regional and local levels has been borne out by the Commission's President, Mr. Santer, in his European Confidence Pact for Employment and by the Commission communication on Action for Employment in Europe, which included a proposal for the creation of territorial employment pacts.

In response to the Commission's proposals, the Florence and Dublin European Councils agreed to implement some 60 pacts on a trial basis, with the aim of developing new approaches as well as illustrating the added value of partnerships at local level.

The initiative to develop pacts is designed to highlight the importance of locally based initiatives to combat unemployment, to identify the difficulties encountered by each of the local and regional players involved and their prospects in the field of employment, to mobilise all available resources in favour of an integrated strategy for the creation of new employment opportunities, as well as to better integrate and coordinate measures for creating and sustaining jobs.

Purpose of this brochure

The aim of this brochure is to support the efforts of local operators in implementing the pilot scheme agreed by the European Council. Its objective is to provide information on relevant experiences in a variety of fields which have several features in common. They were devised and implemented at grass roots level, they are innovative, they testify to a desire to operate within an extended partnership, and they promote a strategy of integrated intervention, namely one based on inter-dependence between the various players involved.

As such, these experiments do not claim to be models of territorial employment pacts. Neither have they been selected on the basis of a systematic analysis of all the possible variations found in the European Union. Instead, they serve as a source of information and inspiration for all those involved in preparing pacts, and in particular they provide a better understanding of the challenges, opportunities and constraints associated with partnerships, innovation and a bottom-up approach.

This brochure supplements the official information already issued by the Commission on the subject of territorial employment pacts, and in particular the *"Guide to Territorial Employment Pacts"*.

It is hoped that this brochure will be helpful to all those engaged, with the Commission's support, in the pilot scheme agreed by the European Council, and that it will prove useful to all the local and regional players involved in local employment initiatives. In this way, the brochure could contribute to the widespread introduction of an approach culminating in the establishment of territorial employment pacts throughout the European Union.

The brochure includes five thematic sections, each dealing with key questions commonly asked of people responsible for launching and preparing partnerships and territorial employment pacts.

- How can local partnerships and employment pacts be developed?
- How can such pacts be implemented and strengthened?



- What innovations for promoting economic development and creating jobs can be introduced at local level using this approach?
- How can partnerships and pacts improve on the main programmes already implemented at local level?
- How can an integrated strategic approach be developed and, in particular, how can such strategies link economic concerns to job creation?

Each section comprises a number of examples of regions and localities with differing economic, social and institutional situations. The administrative details of the project manager or founder are provided for each case study, in order to allow readers to obtain further information directly.

Each local situation is unique. It therefore follows that the local or regional players responsible for creating a territorial employment pact will have to decide on a method. This strategic decision forms an integral part of the process. The examples in this brochure are therefore meant to stimulate debate and guide the action of those responsible for territorial pacts.

Main characteristics of a Territorial Employment Pact: bottom-up approach, partnerships and innovation

Territorial employment pacts share common features. They focus clearly on employment issues; projects are adopted at the level closest to the citizen (the so-called "bottom-up" approach). They always involve *partnerships* and they are *innovative* in the area concerned. Moreover, they are multi-sectoral and all-encompassing, and were established with the explicit agreement of all partners.

The process of developing such territorial employment pacts builds upon the considerable experience amassed in the field of local and regional partnerships. Over the past ten years, an increasing number of regions and localities have implemented a wide variety of initiatives based on a partnership approach between the various levels of government, the public and private sectors, and non-profit-making organisations.

Some initiatives have been the result of spontaneous actions by public or private players, whilst others form part of national initiatives supported by the central authorities, such as the *area-based partnerships* in Ireland and the *comités de bassin d'emploi* in France. Some types of partnership that are widespread in several European Union countries derive from tripartite institutional agreements, whilst others are entirely ad hoc solutions. Some partnerships pursue global strategies whilst others focus on specific sectors or types of action. Some started as informal partnerships and remain so, whilst others, like the recently signed *patti territoriali* agreements in Italy, have been officially recognised.

Local partnerships therefore vary considerably in both scope and form. However, they all serve as a springboard for innovation and the adoption of a bottom-up approach in which local and regional players have a leading role.

The richness and diversity of the local and regional partnerships set up over the past ten years provide a wide range of useful information on practical experiences and methods that can be used by anyone involved in preparing territorial employment pacts. However it should also be noted that the key aspects of the pacts - partnership, innovation, bottom-up approach - need to be interpreted sensitively according to the different economic and social conditions prevailing in the regions and localities concerned, as well as to the institutional and political traditions of each Member State.

The potential benefits to be derived from all the various partnerships and pacts can be considerable by virtue of their common approach - which focuses on employment and is more consistent with local and regional realities - their better use of existing resources, their ability to mobilise new resources, the added value they bring to the actions of each partner; and the mutual reinforcement such actions provide.



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CREATING PARTNERSHIPS AND PACTS



There is no single model of partnership. Different models apply to different situations. However, some features common to a wide range of situations may contribute to the creation of new partnerships and pacts for employment or help to develop existing ones.

People and organisations decide to form a partnership for a variety of reasons. For instance, a partnership may be created as a means drawing up and implementing a new strategy or development plan. In other cases, it may be in response to a local crisis, such as the decline or closure of a major local industry involving job losses. In many instances, however, it is funding requirements which play the decisive role in deciding to form a partnership.

Integrated action - that is to say, action based on interdependence between different players - is a characteristic of partnerships. It is a means of ensuring the commitment of these players to the

process of job development. Multi-sectoral partnerships involving cooperation between the public, private and non-profit sectors, are regarded as the norm in local and regional integrated development. However, when setting up a partnership or pact, account should be taken of the scope of potential partners for real involvement in its development and operation, and especially their willingness or ability to invest resources and take joint or cooperative decisions.

For this reason, formal membership of a partnership tends to be narrower than the full range of people and organisations with an interest in its implementation. A partnership's success therefore depends on creating and maintaining strong links between all the parties involved.

Ultimately, success is also dependent on there being *mutual benefit* and *added value* for each partner. Indeed, the aim of the partnership is to successfully accomplish a venture which the partners, acting individually, could not otherwise have achieved. It is therefore necessary to assess what input is required from participants, especially in terms of time and resources. Such an assessment should focus on the measurable results which the partnership wishes to achieve, as well as on the impact of its activities on the area. Partners should agree to pursue a common goal within an agreed time frame.

The success of partnerships depends on thorough preparation, as well as on the active involvement of all the partners. This often requires partners to

carry out an analysis of the area's strengths and weaknesses before establishing a local or regional employment strategy and setting up a rigorous action plan.

There are many different types of partnership. At one end of the spectrum, some partnerships act as forums for exchanges between people and organisations and facilitate co-ordination and co-operation. Such partnerships are often informal and open. Other partnerships are formally constituted and aim to define common objectives and establish a strategic framework.

At the other end of the spectrum, partnerships are set up to perform an executive function and have sufficient human and financial resources, as well as effective decision-making structures, allowing them to directly implement actions or administer a programme or project. Such partnerships tend to be established as a legal entity with their own articles of association and well-defined rules and procedures.

There are many variations between the two extremes. Indeed, we are seeing the emergence of more sophisticated arrangements which involve a partnership of partnerships. This has become necessary to avoid overlaps and duplication and to ensure complementarity of action within a strategic framework.

Most types of partnership require the creation of some sort of central service, such as a secretariat or coordination unit. Such a service can be pro-

vided by one of the partners or by the partnership collectively. The former might be simpler to arrange but does not encourage the active involvement of all partners.

Ideally the partnership should seek to make optimum use of the skills, resources and experience of each partner. In some cases this is achieved by focusing the partnership on individuals rather than on organisations. This helps to establish the identity of the partnership and provides the best conditions for developing the collective skills of partnership members.



Armagh city & district peace and reconciliation partnership

The Peace and Reconciliation Partnerships provide a forum and focus for reconciliation through broad based community participation. This project illustrates how new and innovative partnerships can be set up and can achieve local credibility.



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The Armagh City and District Peace and Reconciliation Partnership was set up in 1996 as a focus for peace and reconciliation and to prepare a strategy and action plan in relation to the District Partnerships sub-programme of the EU funded Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation. The district which borders with the Republic of Ireland is of average size in Northern Ireland with a population of just over 50,000. It is characterised by extreme polarisation between the communities, and has pockets of severe deprivation in both urban and rural areas.

The programme's aim is to contribute to peace and reconciliation through integrated social and economic actions. The inclusion of those marginalised from social and economic life and in particular the targeting of those people and areas most affected by violence and suffering most acute deprivation are strong features of the programme. District Partnerships were seen as one means by which local energies could be harnessed to help achieve this goal.

The partnership is comprised of one third elected representatives from the District Council, one third from the voluntary/community sector, and one third from the business, trade union and statutory sector. In order to gain approval the partnership also had to demonstrate that it had appropriate gender, geographical and community balance and that it was capable of overseeing the task of implementing a coherent integrated strategy.

Clear guidelines and financial support were provided for the establishment and development of the partnership such that an action plan would be submitted within six months. This highly task-oriented approach helped focus the attention and developed cohesion within a short time scale.

The partnership formally constituted itself and acquired the legal status as a company limited by guarantee. This involved defining its own terms of reference, code of conduct, and approach to management.

The process of formulating a strategy and action plan commenced with local research. This provided a socio-economic profile of the area, reviewed existing strategies and actions and helped identify gaps that existed and the distinctive contribution that the partnership could make. A "brainstorming" meeting was held where the partnership considered an analysis of the nature of the problems to be tackled and the possibilities for addressing them. Through this it agreed its vision for the district and committed itself to a mission statement - "To promote reconciliation by creating an inclusive society characterised by a high level of self-esteem and mutual respect". The main issues emerging from the research were widely publicised. The partnership members then embarked on a consultation exercise which particularly focused on individuals and groups identified in the research. This in itself contributed to promoting the partnership and more importantly its mission. As a result the strategic objectives were developed and priorities for action defined. Confident that it had ensured inclusivity, that a niche for its action had been identified, that new approaches and solutions were possible, that there would be added value and impact in particular in reaching the most disadvantaged sections of the community, and that there would be a contribution to the overall objective of promoting peace and reconciliation, the partnership compiled its action plan.



Partnerships evolve in response to a range of different needs. In the examples below it was identified that collaborative effort could result in the whole being greater than the sum of the individual parts.

DENMARK

The Lolland network of business people

In 1994, a network of business people on the Danish island of Lolland (population 67,000), decided that it would be better to promote the interests of business on the island as a whole, rather than in separate initiatives by business centres scattered throughout the nine municipalities. They decided to create a co-operative alliance between the businesses and the public and private organisations which support them.

They wrote to the heads of companies, trade unions, banks, some members of the Danish Confederation of Employers and to the municipalities asking them to participate in a conference. They set out their ideas, proposals were made and a time-table established. The first meeting of the new Lolland business council was held and a director was appointed.

Erhvervsrad Lolland is an association with its own charter. The main partners are businesses and the municipalities. The 200 members pay a subscription fee. A council of 50 representatives is elected at the general meeting, and these representatives elect a board of directors. Five of the seven administrators are heads of businesses and two are representatives from the Town Council. The majority of decisions are taken by consensus. An operational team composed of the director and 6 associates implement the Erhvervsrad Lolland programme of activities.



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FRANCE

Regional job and employment symposia, Nord-Pas-de-Calais

In spring 1994, the Conseil Régional and representatives of the people of the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region set up job and employment hearings (Assises pour l'Emploi et le Travail). This initiative reflected the desire to make job and employment creation a long term process, supported by society at large. An appeal addressed to the local population by the Presidency of the Regional Council in May 1994 received a good response - 500 citizens (men, women, employed, unemployed, business managers, association leaders) made their contribution to a launch session in which more than 1500 inhabitants took part.

The means at the disposal of the regional community were then discussed for several months, within six workshops. The numerous concrete proposals that emerged from this revolve around the follow-

ing main themes: the reduction/rearrangement of working time and the creation of activities and jobs; the creation of new businesses to cater for essential social and public needs; the empowerment of individuals, organisations and territories; the development of co-operation charters for jobs and employment; the development of a participative democracy. In January 1995, a "synthesis" meeting was held, at which initial conclusions were presented to 1500 participants, and the foundations were laid for six action programmes.



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Kvinnum – strengthening the position of women

The Kvinnum partnership, established in 1991 analyses the situation of women living in rural areas, especially the issue of outmigration of young women. It receives funding from a number of sources including Jämtland's Objective 6 programme.



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The Kvinnum partnership was established in 1991 following an initiative by the Swedish Government to analyse the situation of women living in rural areas. Research showed that the area was experiencing a rapid outmigration of young women. The project was initially financed by the county administration but now receives financial support from various regional, national and EU sources, including the Objective 6 programme for Jämtland.

Kvinnum is an association within which groups representing the interests of women act in partnership with public organisations in the county. Its objective is to "strengthen the position of women in Jämtland" and focuses on education and employment.

The partnership initially consulted informally with as wide a group of interested people as possible. This involved a number of public meetings as well as individual and small group consultations. From this the most important areas of interest were identified and became the key issues for development within the partnership. A more formal tiered structure of consultation involving representatives from many sections of the community was then conducted.

The Kvinnum partnership consists of a management group of high level representatives, with the governor of the county administration as chair person; a working group made up of senior administrators of key agencies interested in women's issues and a reference group of some 50 local women from the county, proposed/identified by the municipalities. Two women, already active locally were employed to form a project team together with a female civil servant at the county administration. This structure allowed an extensive level of consultation, commitment and action. Kvinnum continues to work through this tiered structure of management group, working group, reference group, supported by a project team. The reference group members change regularly in order to

ensure that new needs and priorities are being addressed by Kvinnum. The combination of local people, executive groups and decision makers has meant that actions can be developed and carried out more quickly and efficiently with the project team able to develop projects acceptable to both the grass-roots communities and the policy-makers in the county.

In 1994 Kvinnum became an association, retaining its management board/working group/reference group structure which had proved so effective. Activities include: stimulating and setting up development projects; acting as a forum for regional and international networking; providing assistance to existing organisations to improve the situation of women within those organisations; developing health and social provision to meet the needs of women; and supporting the equal opportunities work carried out by the regional administration.

Identification of needs is the starting point for all Kvinnum projects. This takes place both formally and informally, through regular meetings, seminars and events. A newsletter is distributed four times per year to women's networks in the region.

Once a need has been identified, a project is developed, involving the project team and working group. As working group members are also senior representatives from their own organisation when the project is developed the relevant agencies are already on board. Projects are further legitimised and supported through the involvement in the decision-making process of the management board.



The benefits of partnerships which bring together local know-how are seen as important for economic regeneration in North Rhine Westphalia as well as for social and economic progress in the rural area of Alverca.

GERMANY

Regional conferences in North Rhine, Westphalia

In 1988, faced by the decline in its mining and metallurgical industries, the Land of North Rhine - Westphalia was forced to do some economic restructuring. It was divided into 15 sub-regions.

In each sub-region, regional conferences (mainly attended by unions, chambers of commerce and industry, trade associations and municipal representatives), have been given the task of establishing regional development strategies, determining priority projects and recommending them to the Government.

Employment round tables have also been held at sub-region level. Here, operators of vocational training and employment schemes, social partners

and municipal representatives have devised general employment and qualification programmes. These round tables are prepared by secretaries whose salaries are partially financed by the ESF. This decentralised mode of operation encourages better-targeted programmes through which economic and employment policies are integrated. For example, in Duisburg about 500 acres of industrial wasteland has been converted into a beautiful leisure park, the North Duisburg Landschaftspark. This has provided an opportunity for some 150 unemployed people to gain jobs and qualifications.



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PORTUGAL

CEBI – the Alverca foundation for community development

The small Alverca crèche, set up in 1986, was the starting point for the development of the private social solidarity institution - CEBI. This non-profit-making organisation, legally constituted as a Foundation, offers flexible and dedicated responses to the needs of the local population. 363 women and 42 men work on a permanent basis and make up a multi-talented team of teachers, instructors, doctors, nurses, psychologists, and administrative and maintenance staff. The directors and skilled technicians also provide services on a voluntary basis.

CEBI offers services in various fields, including education, health, job creation, vocational training, family support and counselling. A global approach is taken to problems. The main aim of all the actions is to stress the value of the individual and to

encourage people to be independent and to participate in initiatives. Personal dignity is always respected. Most clients are families with social and economic problems, children, young adults, elderly and handicapped people in need of assistance.

To implement its programmes, CEBI works in partnership with a large number of individuals, companies, public and private organisations. Resources available in social, cultural, educational and financial sectors are therefore pooled and optimised. Clients are expected to make a financial contribution.



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Local labour market committee of Cherbourg, Nord Cotentin

In the Cherbourg area a forum of social partners and those involved with economic and employment policy is striving to become a strategic, policy making body in an area experiencing severe economic problems.



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Nord Cotentin is in western France, on the channel coast, and activity there is based heavily on the nuclear industry and ship-building. The local labour market is very dependent on external economic decisions and has been trying to re-structure itself since the end of the 80s.

In 1991, local actors started to take measures to tackle the problem of placing people in employment. They followed the example of another French region, and set up an employment and training centre (Maison de l'Emploi et de la Formation) in Cherbourg. This offers a variety of active services for people who are in difficulty: contact, guidance and job training. In 1993, the Maison de l'Emploi et de la Formation supported the setting up of a local labour market committee (Comité de Bassin d'Emploi - CBE) in the form of a partnership.

Like the other 80 or so local labour market committees in France, the CBE in Cherbourg brings together social partners and representatives to stimulate local social dialogue. State authorities lend their support. The operating expenses of this platform for exchange and consultation are covered by member subscriptions and a subsidy from the central employment office (Délégation à l'Emploi). The formation of a local labour market committee has meant that the initial structure has evolved: more emphasis is placed on the economic aspect, the partnership has been expanded to include new members, and the geographical base has been enlarged to incorporate 6 municipalities in the urban community of Cherbourg.

The objective of the partnership is to mobilise local economic forces to define a concerted development strategy. It also aims to increase co-operation between local actors, decision-makers and financiers, in order to develop endogenous actions to combat unemployment and social exclusion.

Various initiatives have been taken with a view to achieving these objectives. In order to improve vertical co-operation, agreements have been made between local and other seats of power: (Contrat de Ville, Plan Local d'Insertion par l'Economie). In order to progress from the information-sharing stage to one of collective and strategic regional management, the CBE has been participating, since 1994, in an experiment to harmonise policies on training, insertion and employment within the local labour market. This experiment, in which 14 CBEs from various regions of France are involved, is promoted and managed by a CBE liaison committee (Comité de Liaison des Comités de Bassin d'Emploi). Supervised by the Department of Employment, this liaison committee encourages exchanges between the local labour market committees to which it lends technical support.

To stimulate the emergence of concrete actions the Cherbourg CBE set up 3 working committees in 1996, in charge of regional development, employment & training, and social development. Structured in this way, the partnership encourages the creation of a seed-bed of micro-businesses, global support for small projects, and an exchange of ideas regarding the development of activities centred around the sea.

ITALY

Territorial Pacts in the province of Rovigo, in Caltanissetta and in Lamezia Terme

These Italian Territorial Pacts illustrate how local actors such as local authorities and trade unions can work together in order to promote entrepreneurship and support SME development and employment creation.

The "Patti Territoriali" (Territorial Pacts) in the province of Rovigo, in Caltanissetta and in Lamezia Terme, were set up to support the creation and development of entrepreneurial activity and local development in general. They are areas characterised by weak co-ordination of industrial-agricultural activities (Rovigo), industrial and agricultural decline (Caltanissetta) and weak entrepreneurial activity and unemployment (Lamezia Terme).

These Territorial Pacts aim to promote local development, through SME promotion, job creation and training, in particular:

- The main aims of the Rovigo Territorial Pact are: to ensure co-ordination of spatial planning policies; to set up a network of services for companies in the area; to promote SME co-operation; to facilitate access to funding for technological innovation and training; to establish easily accessible channels for obtaining continuous training; to deal with the endemic undercapitalisation of firms in the territory; to support the local market in its effort to become more competitive and in the process of internationalisation.
- Local action in Caltanissetta is a response to the de-industrialisation process of the petrochemical plant in Gela, which has led to serious unemployment problems. The overall aim of the Territorial Pact is, therefore, to introduce new industrial initiatives in the fields of agro-industry and tourism in order to combat unemployment.
- The Territorial Pact in Lamezia Terme is a response to the existing parochialism and lack of communication at local level and aims to develop co-operation policies with local and external partners that will enable realisation of actions for the promotion of SMEs and will exploit local human resources and the capacity of local enterprises in order to resolve unemployment problems.

All social parties in Rovigo initiated a process of co-operation with local authorities (communes and provinces), through the Manufacturers' Trade Union. The Territorial Pact in the area of Caltanissetta was promoted by the Industrial Association, which initiated

a process of co-operation with the trade unions and subsequently with local authorities (communes and province). The Territorial Pact in Lamezia Terme was promoted by the permanent Assembly of Trade Unions and involves the city of Lamezia and 20 communes within the Lamezia Terme territory.

The Territorial Pact in Rovigo builds upon positive trade union relations, the favourable geographic position of the province and the existing strong human resource base (professional, experienced, flexible), in order to motivate partners.

In Caltanissetta, an innovative protocol regarding industrial relations introduced specific options for the improvement of employment conditions and provided a point of convergence for the partners involved.

The Territorial Pact in Lamezia Terme initiated a local development project with clear objectives which helped focus the attention of all social partners involved.

Activities in Rovigo are characterised by a high rate of integration of economic activity, the innovative intervention of the environment sector, job creation and industrial agreements regarding labour costs which have led to a rise in employment.

Activities in Caltanissetta concentrated on four projects: integration of SMEs; training and quality; development of tourism potential; and agricultural and agro-industrial development.

The Territorial Pact in Lamezia Terme set out as key objectives to develop the local potential, in particular: support innovative activities of agricultural enterprises; promote the quality image of agriculture; promote the agri-food sector; maximise the cultural heritage potential of the area; encourage further development of SMEs; promote a multi-modal transport system; develop seaside tourism and agro-tourism; and exploit opportunities from the annual agricultural exhibition.



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OPERATING AND STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS AND PACTS



Partnerships and pacts must be robust, as well as flexible in order to respond to changing local needs. Special care has to be taken over the way partnerships are implemented and how their internal structures and decision-making processes can be reinforced during the lifetime of the partnership.

There is one cycle of activity that is common to all partnerships. It comprises a variety of tasks, including: identification of needs, project definition and development, implementation of an action plan and individual projects, monitoring, and evaluation.

Once the aims and objectives of the venture have been worked out, more in-depth work will normally be required to identify specific needs and generate new project ideas. Local research will often be required, and a comprehensive mapping exercise and audit of resources can be extremely useful in drawing up project ideas. This needs to be followed up by systematic project development work, which generally involves mobilising and spearheading the

action of many local players, as well as finalising the technical and financial aspects of project proposals. This part of the cycle normally ends with project appraisal and selection by the partnership.

Implementing an action plan and individual projects involves a complex set of activities: financial management; managerial and technical expertise in running projects; and networking and cooperation for ancillary activities. Some of these will usually be decentralised to individual partners or other implementing agencies specialised in training, business consultancy, etc. Others may be implemented as a package by multi-service agencies that include the partnership itself, in cases where it has the required resources and implementation capabilities. In any event the partnership will play a vital role in the action plan, especially as regards its financial management.

Similarly, the partnership will usually have an important role to play in monitoring and evaluating the overall action plan. It will be required to adopt a broad and integrated view and evaluate the plan's effectiveness on the basis of its long-term impact on the area as a whole, rather than on the direct results of its activities.

Developing and implementing a partnership therefore calls for considerable organisational ability and expertise. Even where partnerships bring together a wide range of skills and experience, support in the form of management training, mediation or conflict resolution is often required in order for them to work effectively.

All of this helps to build a sense of collective responsibility, identity and cohesion in the partnership. As a result, the partnership becomes a model of participative democracy and helps to develop and enhance skills in local organisations.

Outward-looking partnerships can often develop links with other similar bodies to exchange experience. When they forge contacts upstream and downstream of their activities with other organisations that are indirectly involved, they often gain in credibility, especially when it comes to influencing policy and the implementation of major programmes.

Other factors may determine the success of partnerships, and enable them to implement their strategies and action plans. Strong leadership is critical to the success of the partnership, as are the appropriate administrative and executive support and resources, and the ability to draw on the required skills - ranging from mediation and brokering between organisations to project management, depending on the partnership's role.

The benefits of the partnership must be visible to all of the parties concerned, including those not formally involved. Not only should there be clear added value, but also a tangible impact on the area. The partnership is required to monitor and evaluate its own performance in line with its stated aims and objectives, adjusting these in the light of changing internal and external circumstances. Flexibility is the key to the long-term success of any collaborative working arrangement.

Partnerships operate in a dynamic environment and sometimes they are themselves responsible for changing this environment. They must demonstrate their responsiveness to change by modifying their own structures, objectives and methods. It is therefore essential for them to continually reassess the validity and usefulness of the partnership arrangement in relation to the prevailing internal and external environment.

In this way, the long-term sustainability of partnerships will depend on a combination of factors of which the most important are likely to be: effectiveness in achieving the desired results; responsiveness to changes in their environment; the ability to diversify sources of income and access to resources; and above all the ability to maintain the support of all the parties concerned.



Val Venosta – an example of rural development

For credibility to be established tangible results are often required at an early stage. Developing local capacity and empowering local communities can provide a suitable foundation upon which to build a sophisticated programme of activity as is illustrated below.



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Val Venosta ("Vinschgau" in German), which is an Objective 5b region, is a German-speaking area of northern Italy. The mountain ranges which surround the valley influence and isolate the activities of the region, which are predominantly based on agriculture, tourism and cottage industry. In this essentially family-based economy, isolation and linguistic and cultural differences combine to make producers somewhat distrustful both of outside help and schemes involving co-operation.

Since the launch of the LEADER I programme in 1992, a common method of development has brought together different interventions; support from provincial authorities, analysis of the region carried out by the University of Innsbruck, research and devising strategies for development, creation and running of partnerships by a development agency.

All the elements needed to ensure the success of the development programme were therefore in place.

Significant resources were contributed by the province and pre-financing mechanisms were created to allow rapid responses to applications from beneficiaries, which gained the trust of the inhabitants of the valley. In order to facilitate the participation of local people four levels of partnership were created: a finance partnership (province, Italian government and European Union); a programme management partnership (inter-commune union); the LEADER I Local Action Group, composed of the eight mayors of the municipalities involved, representatives from the economic sectors and the co-ordinator; and five informal working groups which gained acceptance from local people. Three of these groups concentrated on the main sectors of activity (agriculture, tourism, handicrafts) and two on global questions (professional training, telematics etc.). These groups

succeeded in bringing together key people to collaborate in strategic planning and put forward project proposals.

Specific training programmes were developed for each project, not only to ensure that the participants were well-prepared, but also to verify that each project would create effective and significant added-value in the short term, otherwise it would be abandoned.

Actions can therefore be carried out by different partnerships in the same sector of activity. For example 20 mechanical workshops joined together to open a supply shop and to manage customer services collectively.

Inter-sectoral partnerships were also formed: thus builders, carpenters, painters and electricians set up an eco-construction consortium.

When all the local people appreciate that they are linked to the LEADER I programme via one interest or another, area management schemes which concern them all can be implemented. For example, a cycle path could be opened along the whole of the valley. This idea, which was put forward by hoteliers, came up against some hesitation from mayors because of opposition voiced by farmers who had been using rural pathways for their vehicles. At a relatively advanced stage in the programme, this obstacle was finally overcome, demonstrating the beginning of a partnership culture based on solidarity and co-operation.

THE NETHERLANDS

Vinex – rural regeneration pilot project

The Vinex project is an example of an integrated strategy to seek solutions to problems affecting rural areas, based on consultation with, and the participation of key public and private organisations and the strong involvement of local communities.

The rural area of Oost Groningen, with 151,000 inhabitants and nine municipalities, has for many years relied on agriculture for employment. The VINEX project was set up to address the needs of a declining rural area, involving local communities, the public sector and the farming community to identify and develop new areas of employment and to make the countryside a viable place to live and work.

VINEX was a pilot project launched by the Dutch government, the province of Groningen and five municipalities in Oldamt, a rural area in Oost Groningen. A steering committee of representatives from the province and the municipalities carried out wide-scale consultation with local communities and businesses in the design of a development plan for the area, dealing with agriculture, tourism, housing, labour market, the environment and accessibility issues. Consultation with the local commu-

nity took the form of local information and discussion seminars to present the draft plan and provide a forum for discussion. Around 100 public, private and voluntary organisations were also contacted by post and asked to comment on the draft plan.

Working groups were set up around the priority themes identified in the development plan. A guidance group made up of representatives of the municipalities oversaw the working group activities, and together with the steering committee were responsible for the final decisions on projects.



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BELGIUM

Strategic plan for Mechelen

Strengthening of a partnership requires organic evolution, in particular to create the appropriate structure and means to implement programmes of activity. The example below illustrates how this evolution can take place and how flexibility is introduced to respond to changing needs.



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In 1993, politicians and representatives from business, government and the main local economic and social organisations created an impartial and independent forum in the form of a non-profit making association. The area involved was Malines, situated between Brussels and Antwerp.

The purpose of the forum was to devise a territorial strategy for social, economic and cultural development and the creation of employment.

In 1995 the association became one of the sub-regional platforms (subregionale Streekplatformen) set up by the Flemish government. In this way, it benefited from the support and control programme set up by the Flemish authorities which shared the running costs of the platform with the province; technical aid was given to local actors to help them draw up a long-term and integrated

vision of regional development; and a collaboration charter was signed under which the Flemish government declared its intention to finance the strategic projects set out in the charter.

Five strategic groups were set up to deal with the following matters: promotion, tourism, centre of excellence and expertise, well-being and accessibility. These groups co-ordinated thematic working groups with limited terms of office and well-defined tasks. The working groups were involved in carrying out specific projects.

IRELAND

Dundalk employment partnership

Partnerships can only be sustained if they continue to adjust to an area's changing needs. This project demonstrates how this partnership has matured and deepened following on-going performance reviews and the reorienting of objectives and actions.

The Dundalk Employment Partnership was originally established in 1991 under the Programme for Economic and Social Progress. This was a pilot initiative involving a global grant from the EU, managed by an independent agency ADM Ltd. (Area Development Management). Dundalk, a town of over 25,000 lies in the north east of Ireland and borders with Northern Ireland. It is one of the most disadvantaged areas in the country with very high levels of unemployment and deprivation. The unemployment rate of over 26% masks severe pockets of unemployment. In one estate this reached 73%, more than half of whom were out of work for over 5 years.

This pilot initiative offered the first opportunity for the social partners (employers and employee representatives), the statutory sector and the voluntary/community sector to work together in a formal manner to begin to tackle the consequences of very high levels of long term unemployment.

In the pilot phase the partnership developed a number of initiatives, some of which influenced national policy making and provided examples of good practice in the area of local economic development.

Such was the success of the pilot action that it was extended under the 1994-1999 Local Urban and Rural Development Operational Programme to cover a wider range of designated disadvantaged areas. The programme was agreed in recognition of the role which local initiatives can play as catalysts for local economic, social and environmental development and in particular the importance of locally-based measures to complement the national approach and to release the local potential for development.

Having established its credibility in the pilot phase through numerous achievements the Dundalk Partnership was well positioned to build on these successes and to bring forward a more comprehensive and longer-term action plan for the years 1996-2000. The fact that the partnership was

already established, that staff were engaged and that external links and working relationships were sound meant that it could concentrate on the projects and products, including direct job creation, rather than the processes.

The collective skill and knowledge of partnership members and the expertise of staff was enhanced during the pilot phase with support from ADM support staff. This included dissemination of good practice, notably in the areas of financial control, monitoring and evaluation. The partnership has become familiar with the needs of the local long term unemployed and disadvantaged and is in a strong position to appreciate and influence the complex set of measures necessary to address them.

Its key objective is to co-ordinate the services of other agencies to ensure that they are responsive to the local needs. At the same time the partnership is deepening its exposure to and involvement with the local community through for example the establishment of a Community Resource Unit as part of an enterprise centre.

The Dundalk Partnership has formed a sound foundation and established its credibility through visible action impacting on the local community. It has learnt from its own and others' experience and is now a significant player in the local economy. It thrives on the fact that the partnership has contributed to flexibility, ingenuity and achievement as a whole greater than the sum of the individual parts.



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Pays Cathare – making the most of a cultural heritage

The value of sustained effort based upon partnership can be evidenced in significant employment creation and impact on the local economy as is shown below.



Photography Davy

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Situated at the foot of the Pyrenees, Cathar country covers a vast rural area. With its small population, this territory has experienced difficulties in its two main activities: industry (millinery, footwear, plastics) and wine-growing. Twenty years ago Pays Cathare lacked its own identity. Catharism was no more than a legend buried in the ruins of feudal castles, which were scattered over several rural areas split between three different départements.

In the 1980s preliminary studies confirmed that "Pays Cathare" was sufficiently well-known to allow development based on cultural tourism. This concept was validated by a scientific committee composed of experts on catharism who ensured its authenticity.

In 1989 the Departmental Committee for Cultural Heritage in the Aude region adopted a three point plan: commercial use of 9 main chateaux in Cathar country (so-called "pole sites") around the specific educational theme of cultural discovery; bringing together all pole sites into one network and promoting them as a single entity; associating each pole site with a village tour and offering supplementary cultural activities to tie in with each pole site.

This complex set of measures was achieved by promotion and training which will help the public to understand the "Cathar country" concept and local people to become involved in the operation. A steering committee composed of the main institutional partners, the scientific committee, the working groups for pole sites responsible for bringing the chateaux and villages into commercial use, and the working groups for the various areas was set up. In 1992 this collaboration led to the drawing

up of a "Pays Cathare Charter", by agreement between all the partners. Any business wishing to benefit from the "Pays Cathare Charter" mark must comply with this quality charter and take part in a training session called the "Signature du Pays Cathare". A training plan has been devised for each area of activity, based on quality and the specific cultural nature of Pays Cathare. Today, "Pays Cathare" is a registered trademark which is synonymous with quality for the consumer. There is no charge for the charter mark, but it is only granted for a limited period and can be withdrawn. It certifies that the businesses, their products or services conform to professional quality standards.

A regular newsletter keeps the participants in the charter mark scheme informed of the progress of the programme and a business directory lists the sites, the areas of activity and the 600 businesses involved. External communication revolves around a well-designed series of "Pays Cathare" road signs. Each participating business uses the charter mark in advertising; each business granted the "Pays Cathare" trademark becomes an ambassador for the region.

The "Pays Cathare" programme, which is financed by European, public and private funds and has been backed by the European LEADER programme since 1992, has created 300 additional directly-related jobs in the tourism sector and the same number of jobs elsewhere.

IRELAND

Social and economic impact analysis

Specific tools may be used in the process of monitoring and evaluating performance. These are most effective when adopted as part of a formative process, thus contributing to the building of capacity within the partnership.

FAS, the training agency in Ireland in conjunction with a number of local development groups has devised a Social and Economic Impact Analysis programme as a means of defining, observing and reporting the level of a project's impact. It is designed to help local promoters in the framing of their projects, in negotiation with funders, and in reporting to their communities.

A resource manual has been produced which follows 9 steps:

1. Community vision and values
2. Community health check
3. Needs analysis
4. Change indicators
5. Project formulation
6. Net benefit assessment
7. Negotiation
8. Social accounting
9. Auditing

The pilot exercise revealed that the tool was of particular benefit when adopted from the outset and that the key lay in social accounting. In Southill, in the suburbs of Limerick, where unemployment is almost 50% the concept of integrated local development was introduced through the Poverty 3 programme. Southill Integrated Development Programme (SIDP) being implemented to the end



of the year 2000 and beyond, is having its progress monitored using the Social and Economic Impact Analysis model, as a vehicle to assist in measuring the qualitative and quantitative results of the initiative. The process of undertaking the social and economic impact analysis has helped re-focus activity and contributed to sustaining the partnership.

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INNOVATIVE EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES



Innovation can be defined as a new response to an existing situation, injecting new dynamism which is beneficial to people, businesses, organisations and the area as a whole.

Technological and organisational innovation resulting in the development of original products, services and processes allows new or expanding companies to create jobs. In order to stimulate this kind of dynamic development, companies can adopt managerial methods which encourage creativity. They can also promote the training of their personnel, identify market niches, open up new markets and co-operate with other enterprises.

However, if employment in a particular area is to be created and maintained, it is not enough for a few enterprises to be innovative. Every individual and organisation involved must devise more effi-

cient methods of taking action and come up with new answers to unsatisfied or poorly-satisfied needs. Labour markets can only operate effectively if health, housing, transport and education services also operate effectively. Potential sources of jobs need to be tapped in order to meet new needs arising from changing social structures and life styles. Recent work carried out by the European Commission on local development and employment initiatives has shown that new job-creation sectors include: the environment, culture, and personal and community services. However, if we are to take advantage of such potential employment sectors we must set up new systems for identifying unsatisfied needs. It is these which will foster the emergence of new jobs, as long as the relevant training is provided. Likewise, if this potential is to be exploited to the full, the supply side of the labour market has to be restructured and we shall need to create new types of enterprise and innovative approaches to management and financing, involving service users in ways that guarantee the commercial viability of such enterprises. This will of course mean that legal and administrative frameworks will have to be adapted accordingly.

By fostering an awareness at all levels of what makes innovation work, and by providing training in how to make it work, we can bolster the impact of the various actions carried out.

Each of the different types of action will be more effective if there is efficient coordination. It is by creating innovative synergies to promote clearly-defined development plans that an area and its people will make the best use of existing resources, both tangible and intangible, leading to original solutions and generating new prosperity.

Public authorities will play an important role in setting up the various facilities required by businesses which boost the economy of a region: research and development centres; education and training institutions; technology parks; business start-up services; consulting firms; seed and venture capital funds, etc. Such initiatives also enable public authorities to promote and facilitate the creation of jobs in new fields of employment, encourage experimentation and disseminate successful results.

This approach should also benefit women, young people, the long-term unemployed, the disabled and other groups of people for whom it may be difficult to find work. They can be counselled, trained and provided with new jobs through programmes which satisfy both their specific requirements and those of their region. Problems of access to employment for such groups can often be tackled more effectively by taking concerted and integrated action on the supply as well as the demand side of the labour market, simultaneously if possible.

Since partnerships encourage integrated action that can be adapted to suit several sectors, they extend the expertise and resources available to their members and, in so doing, extend their own capabilities.

Innovation can therefore be found not only in the action of public and private players, but also in the way it is mobilised by both these players and the community at large. It allows activities that promote integrated, lasting, job-creating development to be combined in totally new ways, leading to the development of a truly entrepreneurial culture and enabling local and regional areas as a whole to become both the architects and the managers of their own future.



Furniture-making and use of timber in Eteläpohjanmaa

On the west coast of Finland, furniture-makers are working together to diversify their products, increase quality and improve sales. This enables them to develop their businesses, their region and create jobs.



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The majority of Finland's small furniture makers are located in the province of South Ostrobothnia, on the west coast. Most of their products were originally aimed at the Finnish market. Up until 1989, domestic demand was steady but then sales began to decline and the number of job-losses rose.

Until that point, there had been very little co-operation between businesses. In view of the slump, they decided to create flexible collaborative networks in order to improve the quality of the furniture made in Ostrobothnia and to boost exports. With the support of the Department of Employment, 5 municipalities formed a network. A project was devised and implemented through a public/private partnership. It consisted of grouping businesses together in collaboration circles, depending on their size. One circle united the largest companies, another the medium-sized companies and a third the smallest companies. These circles then formed a network. The larger companies collaborate mainly in fields to do with marketing and exports. They rely on groups of sub-contractors who specialise in the manufacture of very specific products. A network of haulage firms has also been set up. The project is financed jointly by contributions from the Department of Employment, the companies themselves and the Department of Trade and Industry. A project leader has been appointed and a management committee set up, including representatives from the companies, municipalities, local employment agencies, the Department of Trade and Industry, the Regional Development Fund, and technology centres.

Eight export circles have been formed in this way. The 60 member companies have experienced a rapid increase in turnover and exports and 200 jobs were created between 1992 and 1995. The local employment services are supporting the setting up of training courses to help new recruits.

Encouraged by this success, 12 municipalities and the Department of Employment decided, in 1995, to support a new project to run from 1995 to 1998. Subsidised by the ERDF, the main aim of the initiative is to foster more co-operation between the small companies in the fields of design, administration, marketing and exports. This should allow them to develop their markets outside Finland. Some 60 companies have become networked and formed small groups depending on the type of goods, 46 of whom have joined forces to create a marketing and export company of which they are the shareholders.

Various instruments have been developed to manage the network: quality assurance systems, financial and accounting systems, sophisticated computer applications to assist planning and administrative tasks. In order to guarantee the quality of raw materials (timber) the networks have also developed closer ties with suppliers.

New furniture designs in birch have been created and will be unveiled at the Cologne fair in January 1998.

This second project has already helped to create 113 new jobs and several hundred more are expected to arise between now and the year 2005, as exports increase.



The TGS and the network of NOW projects, despite having different priorities and objectives, illustrate the potential of local partnerships in creating businesses and employment in new sectors, particularly advanced technologies and scientific research.

GERMANY

Promoting the shipping sector in Mecklenburg

In 1992, the privatisation of the shipyards in Mecklenburg - West Pomerania was accompanied by social plans which provided for the creation of a local innovation promotion fund. This fund is managed by the TGS (Trägersgesellschaft Schiffbau). Founded in 1991, by the union IG Metall, the mechanical engineers employers' federation for northern Germany Nordmetall, and the government of Mecklenburg - West Pomerania. The TGS was given the task of developing structures and employment in the shipping sector in this region. In order to combat unemployment, the TGS co-ordinates the implementation of active measures in favour of employment, which often receive ESF

support. It also ensures that the innovation promotion fund it manages stimulates the creation of new businesses and long-term jobs. Companies are formed specifically to exploit the results of scientific research. The scientific potential of the area is therefore preserved and capitalised on. Since 1992, it has been possible to support 64 projects which have led to the creation of 28 companies, 570 long-term jobs and some 1000 temporary jobs, at a low cost per job created.



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GERMANY

Network of NOW projects promoting women's business creation and entrepreneurship

This network, funded under the Community Initiative NOW, is made up of four projects in the German Land of Baden-Württemberg. Each project provides information, counselling, training and on-going support to potential and existing women entrepreneurs. Each project has the objective of establishing a business incubator for SMEs or to make existing business incubators more responsive to the needs of women entrepreneurs. The four projects share tasks and are building joint expertise in areas such as health care, services to companies, teleworking, craft production, and in general enter-

prise development issues including, taxation regulations and seed and venture capital. This partnership between the four projects is enhanced by links to Chambers of Commerce and the regional Trade and Industry Ministry. Thus individuals seeking advice can be directed to the most appropriate information source within the region.



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UNITED KINGDOM

Cultural industries quarter in Sheffield

The City of Sheffield, working alongside the private sector has focused on the development of activities in the cultural sector as a means to diversify the area's economic base, create employment and regenerate the city.



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Sheffield, England's fourth largest city, has for decades survived on steel making and cutlery production. The decline of these industries has resulted in a loss of some 50,000 jobs since the 1970s. Actors and agencies recognised the need to develop a more diverse economic base not tied to a narrow group of traditional industries if the city was to survive and prosper.

In the mid-1980s an economic regeneration strategy turned to new sectors to try to generate employment for local people. Since the mid-1980s the City Council, in partnership with other agencies in the city has pursued a deliberate strategy to encourage the development of activities in the cultural sector. This focuses primarily on the media-related group of industries including video, sound recording, film and broadcasting. In 1988 these sectors were targeted by the City Council's economic and employment development for growth, and an area of the city centre was designated a Cultural Industries Quarter (CIQ).

This strategy was an attempt to diversify the local economy, to revitalise the city centre, boost the image of the city and play an important part in the overall regeneration and tourism strategy for the city. The strategy has relied on a strong public/private partnership between the City Council and private sector businesses and sponsors. The City Council has successfully supported the private sector in a number of ways. These include training and business support for potential entrepreneurs, provision of managed workshops at favourable rates, provision of facilities, particularly redundant buildings such as factories and support

in redeveloping such buildings. For its part, the private sector provided significant financial support to the CIQ initiative and small businesses have been supported to grow and prosper. The establishment of a cluster of cultural industries has provided those businesses with added value from sharing resources, developing new products and exploiting new opportunities through networking with related businesses and organisations.

The City Council has also promoted the establishment of child care facilities, restaurants, cafés and bars to support the emerging industries in the quarter as well as to promote an additional source of jobs and contribute to the overall regeneration and revival of the area.

The CIQ has emerged as a lively, vibrant location for business, education and culture and is home to 132 media and science-related businesses. Significant music and arts venues have emerged, including the "Works Station and Media Centre" opened in 1993 and a new cultural business and training complex housing 35 companies in a managed workspace environment providing conferencing, child care, reception and exhibition space. "The Scotia Works" - a former cutlery factory was restored and developed into an arts and media training centre. The "Yorkshire Arts Space" with twenty studios for printing, sculpture, furniture, jewellery, ceramics, instruments, crafts, photography and fine arts. The "Northern media school" brings together the courses provided by Sheffield University in film, video and photography with those provided by the City Council, and the "Audio-Visual Enterprise Centre" which provides managed workspace for new businesses.

The funding for this ambitious and investment intensive initiative comes from a combination of sources including the UK Urban programme, the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the City Council, and the National Lotteries Fund.



Actions to reintegrate marginalised groups into the labour market are illustrated below, focusing on measures tailored to the needs of young people as well as the development of employment opportunities in untapped areas of the local economy.

BELGIUM

Terre – protecting the environment

In 1995 a group of young people in Liège took action to promote sustainable economic and social development and created the Association Terre (Earth Association).

Terre's main activity is organising selective collection and recycling in order to protect the environment and develop jobs for the most disadvantaged people. 70% of its 280 employees are in fact people who were formerly dependent on benefits but who are now providing for their own needs, and paying social security contributions and tax.

Terre refuses to merely occupy people: the jobs are permanent and education and training are integrated into the work. There is a participative system of management, with all employees taking part in meetings for the purpose of assessment, consultation, information and decision-making.

Profits are used to:

- set up a reserve to guarantee autonomy;
- maintain and increase employment;
- support solidarity projects.

Strict management ensures that projects are self-financing and survive, and minimises the financial impact on the taxpayer. Collaboration with local private firms is conducted in the same way as between any client and supplier.

Since the association was formed, its field of activity has expanded considerably, projects are implemented in other parts of the city, activities have been diversified, new products have been developed, marketed and received great acclaim and the group has split up into various branches. However the objective remains the same: to make the economy serve the people.



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ITALY

The ORSO Cooperative – developing tourism

The co-operative ORSO was set up in 1987 by "Gioc", a social movement that emerged from the fight against youth unemployment. Gioc has been involved in a series of initiatives in the Piemontese territory, since the mid eighties. Gradually, the co-operative expanded its own field of action into all activities regarding reintegration of the workforce into the labour market and expanded its target group to include all the potential workforce (young people, adults and disadvantaged groups). ORSO is a social co-operative set up as a limited company.

The ORSO co-operative aims to contribute to the re-integration of young people, long-term unemployed and disadvantaged groups into the labour market, through the provision of information services, training workshops, consultations and initiatives in the tourism sector.

The co-operative is made up of 45 members, including some involved on a part-time basis or on a voluntary basis. Gioc is a member of the co-operative and has the right to vote in the general

assembly. The co-operative makes use of external collaborators on a project basis, when required.

The activities of the co-operative comprise:

- information services for young people and for those actively looking for employment in order to ensure consistency between labour demand and supply. The recipients of these services are the communes, the province, private entrepreneurs and entrepreneur associations;
- support to disadvantaged groups, such as drug addicts or the long-term unemployed, who require assistance and advice in order to be re-integrated into the labour market;
- management of pre-vocational workshops, including the organisation of courses, for participants from the province, the "Regione" and centres for professional training;
- management of an exhibition centre for the dissemination of information and tourism promotion.



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Modabarr – a range of clothing created by women in a rural area

In Northern Portugal, women have organised themselves to make traditional clothes, for private use, an economically viable activity. In doing so they have gained freedom, developed a new form of work organisation and created long-term jobs.



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Barroso is a tiny mountain region in the far north of Portugal. Rainfall is high and average temperatures are low. The geographical relief and the climate are unsuitable for farming activities. The region is isolated and the sparse population has maintained the traditional way of life and techniques. The women make clothing out of wool, to provide for their family's needs. This activity was however dwindling. The young people refused to wear the traditional clothes which they regarded as old-fashioned, and the ready-to-wear industry was providing stiff competition for the cottage industry products.

With the launch of the LEADER Programme in 1991, a group of young people actively involved in local development managed to formulate a project which consisted of setting up a traditional clothes firm. For the first three years, the initiative was handled by a tourism co-operative that young people have been using for about ten years as an institutional and financial tool for implementing their projects. One of the women in the co-operative is in fact solely responsible for most of the over-seeing. Sixty per cent of the initial investment came from the LEADER Programme. During the first six months, a sewing course was organised, and attended by several unemployed women. A traditional fabric supply network was set up, mobilising women still practising this activity in the villages. Research has simultaneously been carried out on the history of the region in order to capitalise on traditional clothing products and embroidery.

Employment of a professional fashion designer proved disappointing. The designs created by the local women sell better because they are more elaborate and authentic. These women have therefore since organised the clothes design themselves.

The products are marketed through various channels: direct sales at local and national level, national fairs, fashion shops. The most innovative promotional campaign involves the organisation of fashion shows. By these various means, a product that was originally for on-the-spot consumption has now found itself a new commercial niche. A prestigious ready-to-wear line, "Modabarr" has been launched. The women are gradually taking over the project. In 1994, it left the "mother" co-operative and a new company was formed. However due to its many contacts, both national and international, the co-operative continues to play a fundamental role in the selling of the goods. In addition to traditional clothing, other local products, such as items used for interior decoration, have also been promoted.

The jobs created are sustainable because the enterprise has succeeded in achieving financial stability without being subsidised, and is able to support the cost of renewing investment. New marketing opportunities are opening up, some in other countries. Although wages are in line with the national minimum, they are nevertheless very attractive for the women of the region. For Barroso, Modabarr represents not only a new activity, but also an innovative way of organising work. The enterprise is in fact the first in the region not to rely solely on the work of family members.



THE NETHERLANDS

De Brug – maintenance services firm

Job opportunities in new services are identified and exploited in this innovative Dutch project which is managed in such a way as to combine action in the social sphere with the demand for new services.

In Vrieheide, a problem district of the Dutch town of Heerlen, a firm called De Brug (The Bridge), created in 1995, is pursuing a dual social objective: to make home and garden maintenance services accessible to people on low incomes and to provide jobs for the long-term unemployed living in the district. The firm offers its services to two types of client: individuals and public bodies. It is constituted as a foundation, but runs like a private firm in order to increase its chances of success. The profits serve to ensure the survival of the company. In order to comply with Dutch law, and the regulations in force in the building industry (safety standards, liability), De Brug has formed a private company, which it owns, and which carries out construction work, collaborating in particular with commercial builders on large construction sites.

23 people who had not worked for more than six years, applied for and secured employment with De Brug. These recruits were trained on the job. Initially



they worked for a trial period of three months. During this period, they retained their unemployment benefit. They were subsequently taken on and their salaries vary between 100 and 130% of the legal minimum wage.

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IRELAND Youthreach

This project offers a second chance to young people without formal qualifications. Public and private organisations offer combined training and professional experience in conjunction with local centres which reflect the needs and conditions of the area.



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Established in 1988, this programme combines education, training and work experience for young people who have left school with no formal qualifications. It was developed from the EU's 1st and 2nd Action Programmes on the Transition of Young People from Education to Adult and Working life.

Sixty one Youthreach centres have now been established in Ireland, providing training for some 2,450 young people per year.

Youthreach trainees are encouraged to identify their strengths and use them as a platform for learning and to break the circle of disadvantage and take responsibility for their lives. The core curriculum concentrates on basic skills development and includes subjects such as woodwork, catering and computer skills. Effective communication skills are central to all courses. Skills which will not have been recognised within the formal education system, such as entrepreneurial ability, are developed and built upon.

Youthreach is helping young people into the labour market through a partnership approach involving education and training organisations together with enterprise promotion agencies and the business community. Trainers are made up of youth workers, social workers, vocational trainers, and people from the business community. Work experience is carried out in close co-operation with the arts and cultural sectors.

Combining education, training and business development at the level of funding, training and work experience has ensured a consistent approach which maximises skills and resources in local communities.

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SPAIN

Mona Lisa – telework training

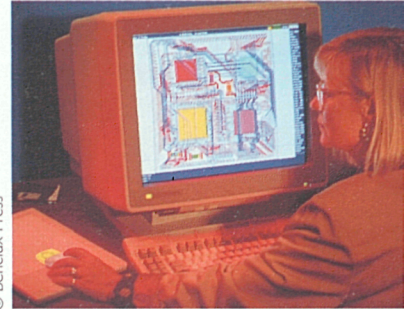
In Valladolid, a number of partners have come together to promote the development of teleworking. They focus both on informing organisations of opportunities offered and training people, particularly women, in teleworking techniques.

The Leonardo funded project Mona Lisa, examined the socio-economic impact of the introduction of new technologies and in particular, the effects of teleworking, particularly on female employment. This project, based in Valladolid involved a partnership between the entrepreneurs association, the association of women entrepreneurs, the trade union, the university, the university development foundation, the science park and private enterprise.

Outputs included information seminars for local people on the impact of information and communications technologies. It also provided advice to enterprise support agencies, public institutions and employee organisations on the socio-economic impact of technological advances, including training in the use of the Internet for business.

The overall objective of the project has been to define teleworking and the professional needs of teleworkers, to develop training, to inform existing organisations of the benefits of such work organisa-

tion and to promote new business development through this form of work. The partnership approach has allowed organisations with particular skills and interests to take responsibility for certain aspects of the research, for example, the entrepreneurs associations, together with the trade union organisation participated in defining teleworking and the professional profile of the teleworker, whilst the university and the foundation, together with the entrepreneurs association developed training and exchange activities. The trade unions were active in providing information to existing workers on the benefits of teleworking and establishing employment regulations for teleworkers.



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MATCHING PROGRAMMES AND SERVICES TO LOCAL AND REGIONAL NEEDS



Areas differ in their strengths and weaknesses, in the structure and development of their economies and levels of employment, in their institutions and the ways they work together. Adjustments must be made between labour supply and demand at local and regional level if we are to avoid problems of unemployment and exclusion. It is at this level that it is possible to develop private initiatives, test new solutions, develop individual and collective projects, and introduce a whole range of sectoral public programmes.

Active labour market policies are also implemented at this level: assistance for job creation in private companies or community projects; facilities to promote access to jobs for groups experiencing difficulties in the labour market; vocational guidance and training programmes; and assistance in seeking and securing jobs.

However, these active policies are not limited to the labour market. They also involve the creation of a project dynamic, by and for local players. And since in every area a wide variety of players are involved, it would be beneficial for the latter to take charge of programmes, decompartmentalising them and targeting them at the specific needs and priorities of the individuals and organisations concerned. This will considerably increase the impact of resources allocated to programmes.

If political, social, economic, institutional and civic organisations within an area are given sufficient resources and enough room for manoeuvre, they can join forces to develop complementary projects which provide multi-dimensional responses to complex individual and collective problems.

This allows a more extensive and accessible range of services to be provided, such as 'one-stop-shops' or integrated 'back-to-work' schemes. Interaction between the partners also enhances the effectiveness of projects, by matching vocational training more closely to the needs of the local economy and limiting dead weight. Collective supervision minimises the undesirable effects of windfalls, substitution or unfair competition.

Local organisations can be given the lateral they need in order to try out and adopt such cross-sectoral approaches based on their experience in the field, by decentralising both the formulation and the financing of policies in areas such as employment. In this way, regional and local authorities or tripartite regional or local councils can, either directly or on an advisory basis, help to define objectives and priorities, as well as help to coordinate and implement policies. Partnerships can be established as part of such decentralised or parallel structures. They can also be established as new associations of varying types and composition, or

they may be less formal in structure with agreements between partners governing the way they should work.

Decentralisation changes not only the ways in which local players work but also those of players at other levels. By encouraging experimentation, supporting pilot projects, coordinating and then disseminating successful projects, these players become partners in an area in which a culture of dialogue, participation and responsible citizenship encourages the desire to frame, shape and control their own individual and collective future.



UNITED KINGDOM

Glasgow works – intermediate labour market

Glasgow Works is an innovative example of how unemployment benefit can be used to create jobs for long-term unemployed people in activities which the city and its people need.



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Glasgow Works is an initiative forming part of the Glasgow regeneration strategy which involves all the key public agencies in the city of Glasgow. It is an intermediate labour market approach to reintegrating the long term unemployed into the labour market through a package of work, training and personal support.

Glasgow Works finances its training and project costs partly using benefits normally paid to unemployed people participating in the national Training for Work (TfW) programme. This funding is made up of the statutory unemployment benefit allowance together with an additional training allowance. This "benefits transfer" resource can then be used to match ESF funding, the other principal source of funding for projects.

Glasgow Works implements a pathways approach to reintegrating long-term unemployed people. Thus all entrants to the programme receive personalised assessment and guidance before starting the programme and receive training in personal development to help them learn how to maximise the benefit of their experience on the programme, i.e. learning to learn. Training emphasises the development of core skills which are most attractive to employers, such as team working, problem solving, flexibility, communications skills and the use of information technology. Assessment and guidance is provided throughout the project, with opportunities for people to have the support of a counsellor or mentor.

A key element is the full commitment of all key agencies in the area. An overarching partnership led by the Glasgow Development Agency, involving the local authorities, Scottish Enterprise, the Employment Service and the Scottish Trades Union Congress provide the political backing as well as strong financial support. Within this are smaller, location-specific partnerships which include a wide range of actors operating locally, including training providers, local regeneration agencies, private

companies and voluntary organisations. These are supported by a team of four development agents within the Glasgow Development Agency which assists in the development of project ideas with each local partnership, provides guidance and operating rules, secures the funding for the local partnership's projects and carries out monitoring and evaluation. This three pronged approach involving an overarching partnership, core team and local partnership ensures political and financial backing and control, administrative support, a co-ordinated approach as well as local actions reflecting the needs of the local community and the opportunities existing locally.

Glasgow Works focuses on projects which not only provide valuable work experience to unemployed people participating in the scheme but which aim to contribute to the quality of life and the economy of Glasgow. Effort is made to ensure that jobs created do not displace existing employment opportunities. Projects have included: Theatre Works - plays developed for schools on issues such as drug abuse, crime, etc. These have led to the setting up of a professional theatre company; Electrical Goods Remanufacture - the refurbishment of refrigerators and washing machines for sale and; City Centre Representatives - people trained and employed as guides and wardens for the city centre.



The experiences below show how harnessing the potential for local job creation, combined with training and work experience can fulfil market need whilst helping disadvantaged groups back into the labour market.

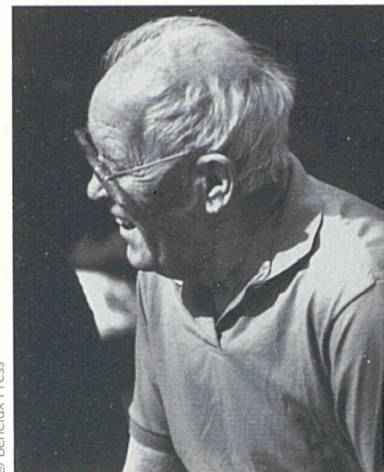
BELGIUM

NewAG – giving professional status to a job traditionally performed by women

At the beginning of the 1990s, a Liège branch of FOREM, (the Wallonia Community and Regional Vocational Training and Employment Office) recognised that people running homes for the elderly had a strong need for professional staff able to assist senior citizens in all aspects of their daily life. There was a definite shortage of qualified workers, and very little initial or on-going training available for women interested in choosing geriatric care as a vocation.

The Liège centre therefore joined forces with the employers' federation in this sector, FEMARBEL, and other people concerned by this problem, to try to match supply to demand. A female training officer at the centre became the project leader and collaboration agreements were signed. Local organisa-

tions from both sides of industry approved the initiative. In addition to the funds contributed by the partners, the programme was financed by the European NOW Programme and the National Fund for Employment. The partners were successful: the public authorities recognised the vocational qualification of Geriatric Auxiliary and a programme of continuing training was devised and approved through a pilot project in 1993/4. The results of the experiment were conclusive: the 48 people who completed the training found a job. This new programme was then adopted by adult training centres which copied it on a larger scale.



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SPAIN

Workshop schools

The workshop schools programme, started in 1985, is promoted by the National Employment Agency and aims to create employment for young people through a training programme linked with professional work experience. Spain suffers from one of the worst rates of youth unemployment in the EU. This programme provides a positive response through an integrated programme of training and work experience. It focuses on activities in the field of culture, and natural and urban heritage using, where possible, traditional production and artistic techniques.

This initiative is used extensively throughout Spain to introduce young people into the labour market, to give them a professional qualification and to encourage the development of entrepreneurial activity and jobs. Each workshop school programme lasts from 1-2 years depending on the type of activity. A "certificate of professionalism" recognised by relevant professional bodies is given to all students successfully completing the course.

The programme is an example of how practical work experience combined with specialised training can create jobs whilst at the same time providing a socially and environmentally useful service to a locality. In Granada workshop schools have been established to redevelop redundant buildings for rural tourism development, as well as training in wood and metal production techniques.

The scheme involves a partnership of national, regional and local agencies, private sector companies and non-profit organisations. Funding is made up of contributions from the National Employment Ministry, the European Social Fund as well as private sector support.



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AUSTRIA

Foundations for employment

In Steiermark, two foundations for employment offer redundant workers the chance to participate in active measures aimed at reintegrating them into the workplace. Placements reflect both their own needs and those of the local labour market.



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In the mid-80s the steel industry in the Linz region, in the north of Austria, suffered a severe crisis. Redundancies rocketed. To avoid premature action and prevent redundant workers becoming isolated and depressed by unemployment, a new organisation called "the foundation for employment" was created. The association was set up, organised and operated in the same way as a company. The aim was to help people who had been made redundant find a new direction, retrain, find a new job or set up their own business. The foundation for employment relies both for its operation and finance on collaboration between various entities; the company making the redundancies, the works council, the remaining workers who have not been made redundant, the social partners, the municipalities, the region, the public employment services and a private company which carries out research and specialises in advising on labour market policies.

The Pengg Kabel AG and Breitenfeld Edelstahl foundations for employment are two recent examples of how the mechanism operates. In the Mürz-zuschlag area, a former industrialised region situated in the Steiermark Land, the fall in orders forced Pengg Kabel limited to close its factory in Breitenfeld in 1996. A foundation for employment was set up for workers who had been made redundant. The nearby company of Breitenfeld Edelstahl was also in difficulties - the special steel it produced was no longer in demand and the company decided to reduce its staff. The redundant workers also joined a foundation for employment which used the infrastructure already set up by Pengg Kabel AG.

From September 1996 to January 1997, 31 men and 15 women joined the foundations on expiry of their employment contract. They undertook a guidance course over several weeks which allowed them to assess their skills and knowledge, develop self-confidence and plan a new career. Following this guidance phase, each participant drew up an individual return to work path. The person's needs and those of the local labour market were both taken into consideration. Finance was provided by contributions from the Pengg Kabel and Breitenfeld Edelstahl companies and the regional company for economic development. Contributions were also received from workers who had not been made redundant, as well as the interest on closure and redundancy payments, which were delayed. Whilst they attended the foundation the participants received a bonus in addition to their unemployment benefits. The participants spent 8 months on average at the Pengg Kabel AG foundation and 3 months in the Breitenfeld Edelstahl foundation. The Land covers the cost of vocational counselling for former employees of Breitenfeld Edelstahl. In March 1997 the rate of re-integration of people from the two foundations back into the labour force was 74%.

The Dutch projects outlined below illustrate how the management of national programmes and support schemes can be adapted to more effectively meet the needs of local communities.

THE NETHERLANDS

Promoting work in Flevoland

Since 1995, the Dutch region of the Flevoland polders, which is an Objective 1 region, has been the location for a "Pionieren in Flevoland" pilot scheme which will continue until 1 January 2000. In 1995 the regional centre for employment signed an agreement with the social partners and the six municipalities of Flevoland under which an independent organisation, the "Regionale Transfer Organisatie" was created. The name defines the tasks undertaken by the organisation; it is responsible for transferring the emphasis to the demand for work and actions which will allow this to be extended; finding dormant jobs, developing new methods of organising work; job-sharing by several employees, more flexible planning of working time etc. Another type of transfer envisaged is from the passive measures of benefit payments to active labour

market policies such as the creation of subsidised jobs under the national Melkert II Banen scheme. The third type of transfer involves a gradual reduction in the employment subsidies given to employers, so that the employee is finally re-integrated into the real labour market.

Any measure such as this could cause problems due to unfair advantages, substitution and unfair competition. In the "Pionieren in Flevoland" experiment, these problems were minimised due to the participation of the social partners.



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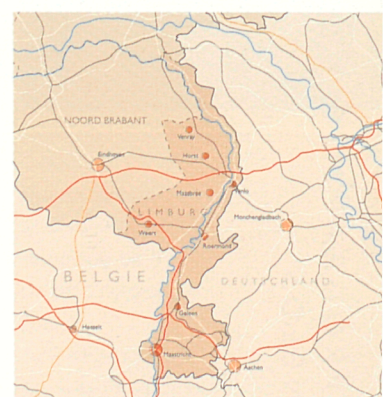
THE NETHERLANDS

Joining forces to help job seekers in Limburg

In April 1996 a major conference was organised in Limburg, Netherlands, in order to define a plan of action to encourage collaboration between the municipalities, social security organisations and regional employment services. Collaboration is seen as a means of achieving 3 goals: to encourage social security recipients to rejoin the workforce; to optimize the services provided to job seekers by making these more accessible; clearer, more specific and more flexible; to reduce administration costs by providing shared information offices and follow-up of clients.

This initiative comes within the framework of a programme for all regions which is co-ordinated at national level. However the action programmes are devised at regional level.

Around one hundred representatives from the municipalities, the social security organisations and the regional employment services took part in the Limburg conference. Following this conference 5 working groups representing the 5 sub-regions of Limburg were created. Each of the 5 sub-regions has created its own consultative structure. These are generally composed of a steering group (strategic level) and a group of projects (operational level). Pilot projects have been chosen in each sub-region.



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GERMANY

Community services in Hamburg

This project, run by a social interest group, takes advantage of a national measure to train the unemployed within the framework of community service projects. Partnerships on different levels consolidate the actions taken.



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Hamburg has been a cross-roads for several main trade routes for centuries. The many outside influences have enriched the architectural heritage of this hanseatic city. Often however it has lacked the money to maintain and restore the monuments, buildings and historical sites.


For several years the Arbeit und Lernen Hamburg (ALH) social interest group has concentrated some of its activities on the restoration of monuments. This activity provides the long-term unemployed with the chance to learn a wide range of restoration techniques and gain qualifications.

Arbeit und Lernen Hamburg was founded in 1984 by the training institute of the federation of German trades unions Berufsbildungswerk Gemeinnützige Bildungseinrichtung des deutschen Gewerkschaftsbundes and the Arbeiterwohlfahrt Landesverband Hamburg e.V. social aid association. Since its creation ALH has found work and training for the long-term unemployed with the aim of re-integrating them into the "primary" labour market. To perform its action, the ALH applies a Federal-Government measure called ABM (Arbeitsbeschäftigungsmassnahme) which allows public and private companies to obtain subsidies from the Deutsche Bundesanstalt für Arbeit, the German federal Labour Institute, provided that they employ jobless people within the framework of additional community service projects.

Between 1984 and January 1997, ALH carried out 206 projects of this type. Some 1,824 long-term unemployed people have taken part and 521 of these have subsequently found a job in the "primary" labour market or received training which led to new qualifications or redeployment. In order to succeed, ALH must avoid unfair competition

with private businesses at all costs. An accompanying committee composed of representatives of the local employment services, the City of Hamburg and the Chamber of Commerce monitors the additionality aspect of the projects; ALH may carry out works provided that these do not come within the remit of the public authorities.

The biggest project began in 1991, when ALH started the Anglican Church restoration project. Built in the classic style during the last century, the church was damaged during the war and successive restorations could not prevent further deterioration. Arbeit und Lernen employees worked on the project for four years with support from the local authority, the Anglican Church, private companies and individuals. The City of Hamburg Historic Monument Conservation Department provided technical assistance. This vast project was financed by money from the ABM, contributions from the City of Hamburg and a subsidy from the European Social Fund for professional training. A renovation committee set up in the commune where the Church is located monitored the quality of the work. At the beginning the local people were somewhat distrustful, but gradually the building began to recover its splendour and both the locals and the craftsmen were very proud of it. The technical success, and the social impact led the German National Committee for Conservation of Monuments to recompense ALH for all its work in the field of restoration by awarding it first prize for the conservation of monuments in 1996.



Prompt intervention and actions of a preventative nature have become a priority for the Storstrøm Regional Labour Market Council. This is combined with innovative approaches to training and work experience.

DENMARK

The Storstrøm labour market council

In Denmark, national labour market policy, for which the Secretary of State for Employment is responsible, has been decentralised. Fourteen Regional Labour Market Councils develop the labour market policy implemented in their area. In common with the other councils, the Storstrøm Council has a President, 7 employer representatives, 7 worker representatives, and 7 regional and local authority representatives. The Regional Director of the State Employment Service acts as Secretary to the Council.

This Council gives priority to pro-active and preventive actions: high quality business services tailored to specific needs, prompt assistance for unemployed people seeking jobs and training, recognition of what people want and the needs of the local labour market, harmonisation of local labour market initiatives.



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DENMARK

Job rotation

Job rotation offers new solutions to two problems – meeting the training and personal development needs of employees and providing training and work experience for unemployed people. This Danish scheme offers an interesting example of new methods of work and training to meet the needs of a changing labour market. Widely applied throughout Denmark, 29,000 people participated in the scheme in 1995 and it is now being piloted in other parts of the EU.

The scheme is an agreement between private and public employers and the Regional Labour Market Council to provide training for employees within a company, and while they are being trained to temporarily replace them with unemployed people who in turn can be trained and receive structured work experience. The Labour Market Council contributes to the cost of the employees' training.

Job rotation is used widely across the Storstrøm region. In 1995, 19 schemes were in operation, involving 814 employees and 308 unemployed people.

The Nykøbing F post service project is an example of a job rotation scheme in Storstrøm initiated in 1995. 48 postmen and women attended vocational

training courses in service and quality management and language training. At the same time, 22 unemployed people received four weeks training in postal sorting and delivery and four weeks practical work experience. Following training they were employed for 39 weeks by the postal service, paid for jointly by the Labour Market Council and the postal service itself.

Other Job rotation courses, particularly in the private sector focus on project management, vocational training and company analysis.

A company wishing to participate in a job rotation scheme contacts the Labour Market Council which funds the initiative out of the employment and training budget financed from general taxation. If the proposal is accepted, employees are eligible to receive financial support for training under the "leave benefit" scheme (equivalent to unemployment benefit rates). The employer is required to pay the difference between this benefit and the employee's usual salary, up to a maximum of six months. Unemployed people will then be taken on by the company and their unemployment benefit will continue to be paid by the Labour Market Council.



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INTEGRATING STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS



Integrated action - meaning action based on a relationship of interdependence between different players - is vital in helping partnerships to formulate a strategic approach. Such integration brings together the dimensions of economic development and job creation which are found in the programmes and resources of the various members involved in partnerships and pacts. Integration operates at two levels - that of action and that of strategy.

Integration through action can be achieved in a variety of ways. At one end of the spectrum, large multi-dimensional projects can be developed to cater for a wide variety of needs. They combine economic development and job creation objectives, and include services designed to help disadvantaged groups such as the long-term unemployed to find new jobs. At the other end of the spectrum, less ambitious projects might involve the creation of gateways to employment, linking a number of initiatives to assist disadvantaged groups in securing available jobs. Such projects would involve helping to review the state of play; strengthening school/industry links; training; the acquisition of work experience and social and business skills; and a whole host of other elements likely to involve several partners.

Integration through strategy can take various forms. Partners might develop a new joint strategy for the area as part of the process of developing a pact. In cases where such a strategy already exists, the main

task of partners will be to build on this strategy, turning it into an employment pact for the area.

More often than not a number of strategies and programmes are already in place and the main task is to link them together and create synergies by coordinating objectives, resources and actions.

Examples abound of such efforts to develop global strategies. They involve either setting up a strategic partnership of local partnerships or extending an existing economic development strategy to include social and occupational reintegration objectives. The pact then becomes a vehicle for setting up such global or collective strategies.

These examples of global strategies show that integration will only be successful if partnership structures and procedures are effective. It is important to have broad representation of local and regional partners, as well as a clear hierarchy of responsibility. Such links can also help to secure the commitment of local community organisations, local and

regional administrations, and central government. They are essential for joining the grass-roots approach, characteristic of much of the experience with local and regional partnerships, to the conceptual approach typical of large public programmes and central government policies.

However, it is clear that formal structures and procedures will never be enough to achieve an integrated approach. Only a genuine culture of cooperation will yield optimum results.



UNITED KINGDOM

OPNHE – Social and economic revival in Hull

OPNHE provides an interesting example of how agencies in the City of Hull have joined forces to address the social and economic needs of a deprived housing estate through a combination of employment and training support with business development.



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Orchard Park and North Hull estates are two large suburban local authority housing estates. During the 1980s the estates suffered from low quality housing, no commercial or retail activity, high levels of unemployment and long-term unemployment as well as rising crime and delinquency.

Recognising the need for targeted action to revive the area, in 1985 Hull City Council established a working party to investigate ways of addressing the area's problems. It was agreed that a partnership approach involving the key public agencies was necessary and the support of the private sector would be sought. The initial partnership established to manage the new company "OPNHE", limited by guarantee, was based on the "Business in the Community" concept which promoted the idea of business involvement within communities. Thus OPNHE became a company, with members not shareholders, and a board of directors, made up of: four private sector directors representing the business community, four resident directors representing the local community, two local authority directors and one chief executive.


OPNHE's development strategy was the result of a wide ranging survey of the needs of local residents and the local economy in general. A strategy containing eight elements was developed: small business advice and support; managed workspace provision; local employment service for residents, advertising jobs/counselling; development of community businesses capable of providing services to residents which could develop into viable businesses staffed by local residents; provision of an advice service to residents on issues such as debt counselling, welfare rights, etc.; provision of a child care facility to allow local parents to enter the labour market; the provision of training opportunities and the attraction of providers of locally-based training appropriate to local needs.

Performance statistics for the company are very impressive. In the period 1991-1995, whilst unemployment in the UK grew by 13.9%, unemployment in the Northern Hull area in which OPNHE is located increased by only 0.1%. Between July 1995 and July 1996 unemployment in Kingston upon Hull excluding the OPNHE area fell by 10.39% whilst in

the OPNHE area it fell by 13.73%. In the period from January 1991 when the company began providing services to residents to 31st December 1996, a total of 1,681 residents were placed in employment and 280 onto training courses. Twenty three managed workspaces were constructed and all are occupied. In 1993 the company also constructed a new two-storey office complex, a training centre and a 28 place child care facility. Housed within the office complex are the Citizens Advice Bureau, Job Advice Centre, Job Club and a Community Café.

OPNHE has successfully combined employment support and advice. It is now home to a branch of the Employment Service where vacancies are advertised and job-seekers can receive counselling and advice - with well structured business advice, training and support. OPNHE offers high quality training and support for small businesses in areas of business development, including the Shield Programme in managing changing technologies and innovation. Many of the new companies established within OPNHE are working in high technology production or services and have developed innovative ways of working thanks to the Shield Programme. This combination of support to the unemployed together with a focus on business innovation and development have generated 100 new businesses between 1991 and 1996 and 270 new jobs. Visits to the OPNHE complex now average approximately 2000 per month.

A committed partnership has been one of the key factors of OPNHE's success. All partners on the board are equal and all decisions are taken by consensus. In recent years a new and larger partnership has been established under the banner "Partners for Jobs". This partnership brings together all the agencies working on local regeneration in the area, as well as the private sector and local residents. Thus OPNHE activities form part of the wider regeneration strategy for the city and resources are more effectively targeted and maximised.



The Pathways concept in Merseyside and the LEADER management structure operating in Redange-Wiltz show the importance of linking economic and employment strategies and actions to meet the needs of the local population.

UNITED KINGDOM

Building pathways to integration

In the Objective 1 region of Merseyside, the City Council is working with 38 local communities to develop local partnership to bring about change in the highest areas of unemployment. The "pathways" principle - that communities are key players in actions to regenerate deprived areas and that resident involvement helps to ensure that counselling, training and employment services are accessible to the people for whom they are intended - forms the major component of the urban regeneration strategy of the area.

Pathways is a package of measures which maps out a route to employment opportunities. The route involves strong public/private/community partnerships at various stages. Each community involved in the initiative has established a local partnership made up of public, private and community representatives with an interest in the area. The partnership is responsible for designing a plan to meet the area's development needs in the field of employment and training, enterprise promotion and development, the environment, health and social needs.

Once the plan has been accepted, the partners then work together with relevant agencies to deliver projects contained within the plan.

Each local partnership receives ERDF and ESF support largely from the Objective 1 Programme for Merseyside, together with funding from the City Council and from voluntary group donations to develop the partnership and area plan.

In mid-1996, the 38 partnerships formed themselves into a community network to provide representation in key decision-making areas for communities in the Pathway Partnerships through a democratic and representative structure.



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LUXEMBOURG

Local action group in Redange-Wiltz

In the Haute Sûre region of Luxembourg, several novel initiatives were taken between 1991 and 1993, in various sectors, with the support of the European LEADER I Programme. Eager to continue down this road, 11 municipalities, 6 associations and 3 professional organisations joined forces in September 1995 to form the Redange-Wiltz Local Action Group under LEADER II. The group's budget is supplemented by European structural funds (EAGGF, ERDF, ESF), the Luxembourg government, the municipalities and private investors. The Chambre de l'Agriculture has been appointed to handle administration and finance. Each partner has one representative on the management committee.

A regional development strategy has been devised, adopting a multi-sector approach, and taking the specific needs of the area into account. The strategy

has a parallel action plan which incorporates innovative, model, transferable projects. The Local Action Group co-ordinates and supports the development projects. It ensures liaison between the programmes run in different fields: mobilisation of local actors and population, advice for small and medium-sized enterprises, promotion of rural tourism, encouragement of innovation, revitalisation of the farming and forestry economies, diversification of cultural products offered, environmental protection, cross-border co-operation.



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The projects below illustrate how combining social, economic and employment priorities, and involving the key public sector agencies as well as the business community and employment support organisations can generate new employment opportunities.

SPAIN

Industrial Accord for the Barcelona metropolitan region



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The Barcelona Metropolitan Region with 4 million people is the largest industrial region in the EU, accounting for 70% of Catalanian employment, 40% of which is in industry. Although Barcelona is home to 70% of Catalonians, it makes up only 10% of its surface area.

The Accord is a strategic alliance with three main objectives: competitiveness, sustainability and social cohesion. It also aims to improve confidence in the region and encourage growth and increase employment. The Accord resulting from the Barcelona 2000 Strategic Plan – an initiative to identify future regional needs – called for the unification of employers' associations, trade unions and local government to strengthen both the economic and business structures and improve social cohesion. Responding to the increasing internationalisation of the Spanish economy and the need to ensure competitiveness and flexibility; actions focus on: the business environment; training and education, cohesion and the organisation of the social fabric and the natural and physical environment. It is recognised that the competitive advantage of a region is no longer based on direct labour and capital costs

but rather on total productivity generated by a range of factors including mobility, housing, services and skills. The Accord addresses the following areas:

- regional accessibility – transport/telecommunications, housing;
- sustainability – reducing energy consumption and rationalising the region's use of the natural environment;
- training and vocational skills – minimum training for employees, vocational training, co-ordinating and upgrading training provision;
- promoting dynamic activity and initiative – promoting entrepreneurship in schools, colleges and vocational training programmes;
- coordinating local government policies to meet the Accord's objectives;
- reinforcing a culture of social dialogue – establishing a permanent platform for social agents to meet, encouraging other organisations to become involved, research.

The Accord is to be run by a steering Committee made up of representatives from employers associations, the trade unions, local government and universities. Actions are to be developed regionally and locally depending on the type of action.

GERMANY

Exploiting the maritime and tourism potential in Bremerhaven



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The Schaufenster Fischereihafen based in the port of Bremerhaven aims to tackle the problem of the declining importance of the fishing industry through the restructuring and creation of enterprises linked to the port and its tourism potential. The project is supported by structural funds under objective 2 and the Community Initiatives RENAVAL and PESCA.

The project represents a pact between private bodies and the public sector under the co-ordination of the port management and development association. As a result there has been substantial reconversion through significant infrastructure development and the establishment of some 20 enterprises involving the creation of some 200 jobs.

It has created a new dynamism in the area which has meant that existing skills can be built on, and extended to a new area, namely tourism.

The project demonstrates the value of a multisectoral approach to the reconversion of the port, based on the strong integration between activities, including training and support, business and facility/amenity establishment, and marketing, together with on-going close co-operation between the public and private sectors.

Rural decline and deindustrialisation, whilst being very different problems, have common characteristics which can be addressed through a partnership approach focusing on the strengths of the local area.

GREECE

The development agency of Parnon

As agriculture declined and few new jobs created, the large mountainous area of Parnon, in the Peloponnes, experienced an economic downturn. A development agency was then established bringing together a number of public and private organisations in the area to develop the region. The agency is a partnership between local authorities and agricultural cooperatives, cultural associations, the Local Union of Municipalities of Arcadia and Lakonia and 42 private individuals in the area.

Each partner owns shares in the agency, with the largest shareholder being the municipalities with 75% and the smallest being private individuals with 1.4%. The partnership has 120 members and a nine-person board of directors to oversee the agency's activities. A president, vice-president and managing director are elected by the general assembly, made up of all shareholders.

The partnership development plan focuses on:

- the development of the primary sector, focusing on natural climate and terrain advantages;
- the development of agri-tourism;

- conservation and protection of the environment, including developing the use of renewable energy sources;
- cultural expression and creativity.

The Agency is also responsible for the management of LEADER II and provides information to the local population on EU funding programmes and training to partnership members.

The agency has developed links with other local authorities and provides support to them in the analysis of local conditions, surveys and research.

Borne out of a common desire to address severe local problems, the Parnon development agency is the first cooperation of this kind coordinating actions to the benefit of all participating organisations. The success of the early work of the agency has been a catalyst for further informal partnerships and cooperation in the region.



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FRANCE

Local employment policies for the disadvantaged in Vierzon

The region of Vierzon, with its 26 municipalities situated in the heart of France, has a long industrial history and the economic situation there is a cause for concern. The old industries established in the region are experiencing a crisis and unemployment is high, particularly among young people. Faced with these difficulties, local actors seized upon the implementation of a Plan Local d'Insertion par l'Economique (PLIE), in 1995, as an opportunity to develop a more coherent local policy on employment, training and insertion.

By mobilising a huge partnership, the Vierzon PLIE aims to socially and professionally integrate 260 disadvantaged people into the Vierzon labour market within 3 years (1996-1998). These people

benefit from a complete insertion course and personalised support. The programme is assisted by the European Social Fund.

To be successful in helping struggling job-seekers to find stable employment, it is necessary to focus on jobs at the other end of the chain too. In this respect, local firms, economic actors, and the employers' group ALISE (born out of the regional diagnostic exercise which preceded the setting up of the Vierzon PLIE), play an important role in the regional dynamics.



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The commitment to partnership and towards a common objective may be encapsulated in an agreement between the responsible authorities. The examples below illustrate how partnership contributes towards cohesion and integration of social and economic actions.

IRELAND

Donegal county strategy group



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The Donegal County Strategy Group was established in 1996 with the aim of securing cohesion between a range of local development initiatives. The Group is a non-executive structure through which co-operation and exchange takes place at county level.

There exists a wide range of statutory, voluntary and private organisations which present a complex matrix of action which contributes to the overall development effort in the county. In the absence of a global strategy numerous sectoral and parochial area-based strategies were developed. The first task involved taking stock of both the socio-economic situation and the actions being undertaken.

A comprehensive resource document was published and widely distributed. A strategic framework was developed which integrated the existing

strategies and action plans in a manner which retained clear overall developmental direction. This enabled a "Co-ordination Strategy" to be developed which has provided the basis for on-going co-operation and complementarity. The approach is one which builds on development effort from the bottom up, recognising the mandate and autonomy of participating organisations whilst working towards the collective common aims of the Group.

BELGIUM

A forward commitment to fighting unemployment



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Up until the 1980s, coal mining was the main industrial activity in Limburg, Belgium. This had attracted a lot of immigrant workers.

In 1983, i.e. 4 years before the successive closures of the last mines and the loss of 17,000 jobs, the commune of Genk, one of the principal mining towns in Limburg, started assembling a Contact Group for Employment, as a preventive measure. The group is presided over by the commune. It brings together all the political parties and social partners. The partners exchange ideas and proposals with a view to developing a concerted strategy for integrating the immigrants and developing jobs in the short and medium term.

In 1987, the European Commission, the Belgian Federal Government, the Flemish Government and the provincial authorities signed a contract for the

future ("Contrat d'Avenir"), through which they undertook to unite their efforts and combine their resources in support of the following objectives: creating jobs, reducing unemployment, raising the level of education of both adults and children, and implementing specific programmes in areas affected by mine closures.

Since 1989, the emphasis has been placed on social programmes: housing, education, social welfare. Between 1987 and 1991, 41,500 jobs have been created.

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